



N2045T a Schweitzer 2/33 Glider accident Saturday May 4th at Van Sant.

Shlomo Zelkine

to:

Robert Ference

05/08/2013 09:41 PM

Hide Details

From: Shlomo Zelkine [REDACTED]

To: Robert Ference/AEA/FAA@FAA,

1 Attachment



Van sant 9N1 airfield.jpg

Hello Robert, here is my report.

Thank you,

Shlomo.

Shlomo Zelkine

[REDACTED]

On Saturday May 4th at Van Sant N2045T a Schweitzer 2/33 Glider with Don Vsseller took off behind a Maule MT-7 tow plane piloted by Shlomo Zelkine on runway 07.

The basic plan that was agreed with the glider pilot before take off was to turn left crosswind and left downwind on the tow, and only then turn right away from the airport, when the glider is high enough to return to the airport if needed, and up to 3,000 ft where the glider will release and practice stalls and so on.

After takeoff the glider was observed to be yawing widely left then right then left again. The tow plane was operating normally.

The gliders, as observed in the mirrors of the tow plane, was most of the time above the normal position on tow, and with the nose of the glider pointing not to the airplane but 45 deg. to the right. it was towed in a manner that resembled a slip, but behind the tow plane.

The tow plane kept going up strait, and I was hoping to give the glider pilot the option to release the cable at some point and land back at the airport.

At about 400 feet the glider released from tow and made a left turn to land on runway 23. It struck some trees at the edge of an open field on approach and fell to earth.

Watching all this from above, in the tow plane, I was not sure if Don will go to runway 25, the airplanes runway, or fly over the trees and try to land on runway 23, the gliders runway.

Normally the gliders fly a long left base to runway 25, continue on base before the trees to turn final to runway 23. The glider was over the trees when I saw it after the release, so it seems Don tried to go on to runway 23.

The glider looked like flying with the right wing down, and it did hit the trees with the right wing tip, turn right to about 020 deg. and hit the ground nose down. Then it came to rest heading about 070 deg.

The glider came back from long and heavy maintenance, rebuilding the tail section. It was assembled on Van Sant airfield by George Taylor and his shop team. When the glider was polled to runway 7, after it was told by George that it is ready, a pre-flight check was done by Don. I taxied the tow plane over and parked on the side, next to the glider, outside the runway.

Don and the other pilots and people there, members of the Civil Air Patrol, told me that some Nuts on the struts of the glider and split pins are missing, as well are some screws. We called George who came and saw the missing parts and later came back and installed the missing parts.

Don asked for some oil DW-40, and I helped put some on the hinges of the rudder and elevator, while Don put some on the airbrake handle in the cockpit and other places.

As far as I could see all the bolts and nuts where in place at that time. I was asked to prepare the tow plane for tow, so I asked Don a few times if he did a good pre-flight and is now ready to fly. He did a few checks and tests with some of the other people there and said he will be ready. I went to the tow plane, and after I saw that Don was already in the middle of the runway in the glider ready to go taxied in front of the glider, check the release cable system in the airplane with the person who attach the cable to the tow plane, and then, after the cable was attached again, started to taxi and later takeoff as the signals were given by hand by the wing runner.

--- On Tue, 5/7/13, [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Subject:

To: shlomo\_zelkine [REDACTED]

Date: Tuesday, May 7, 2013, 7:55 AM

Shlomo,